

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 15 of page 8 of the original specification with the following amended paragraph.

In the normally closed solenoid-operated valve as constructed above, when the movable element 18 excited by the electromagnetic coil 17 is moved to come close to the stationary element 13, the operating fluid within the damper chamber ~~43~~ R3 is discharged into the communication grooves 22 by way of an annular variable throttle and the dent groove 26 as fixed throttle. The annular variable throttle defined at this time has a path area of $(h \times l)$ which is made by multiplying the circumferential length (l) of the internal wall surface 24a of the annular shim 24 with the clearance (h) between the lower end surface of the stationary element 13 and the annular shim 24 as closed wall. As understood from the graph shown in Figure 4, as the movable element 18 comes close to the stationary element 13, the variable throttle decreases its path area thereby to increase its throttle resistance. Further, when the annular shim 24 provided on the movable element 18 is brought into contact with the stationary element 13, the damper chamber R3 is closed by the lower end surface of the stationary element 13 and the top surface of the movable element 18, in which state the damper chamber R3 remains to communicate with the communication grooves 22 only through the dent groove 26.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 1 of page 9 of the original specification with the following amended paragraph.

As understood from the foregoing description, in this particular first ~~first~~ embodiment, as the movable element 18 ~~43~~ comes close to the stationary element

13, the path area which makes the axial opposite ends of the movable element 18 43 communicate with each other is decreased to increase the throttle resistance and the moving speed of the movable element 18 is reduced. Thus, the operation noise which is generated when the movable element 18 is brought into contact with the stationary element 13 can be sufficiently diminished. Further, when the movable element 18 is far from the stationary element 13, the clearance (h) between the lower end surface of the stationary element 13 and the annular shim 24 is large, which enables the operating fluid within the damper chamber R3 to be discharged therefrom and charged therein without being substantially throttled, so that the movable element 18 can move at a high responsiveness. Accordingly, it can be realized to provide a solenoid-operated valve which is inexpensive and which is capable of, without any sealing member to be added as used in the prior art solenoid-operated valve, effectively restraining the operation noise accompanying the open/shut operation thereof and preventing the delay in response from occurring.